

WASHINGTON, D.C. - Congressman Sam Farr (D-Carmel) this week introduced the "Clean Cruise Ship Act," a bill aimed at limiting damage caused by cruise ship pollution.

The legislation will create coastal zones where cruise ships are prohibited from dumping waste, strengthen current waste treatment standards and increase surveillance to ensure compliance by the industry.

"Big cruise ships make for big pollution, and it's high time the cruise industry take responsibility for its actions," Rep. Farr said after the bill was introduced Wednesday evening. "We saw the effects of negligence five years ago when a cruise ship dumped thousands of gallons of wastewater off our coastline. Such carelessness must not be allowed to continue."

Laws currently allow cruise ships to dump untreated sewage three miles from shore, a danger to health, environment and economy. The bill (H.R. 6434) would increase the anti-dumping zone to 12 miles from shore and would require waste treatment beyond 12 miles. It would also create an observation and monitoring program. Rep. Farr introduced this bill in the two previous Congresses, but Republican leaders never let the bill move forward.

"What makes the actions by negligent companies so egregious is that some segments of the cruise industry are already following these common sense directives," Rep. Farr said. "If the entire industry would pick up on the lead of these trailblazers, this law wouldn't be necessary. But since they aren't, Congress must take action to protect our waters. These cruise ships are nothing more than floating cities, and they must be held accountable just like their land-bound peers."

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